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C O N F I D E N T I A L ABUJA 002428

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 08/15/2012

TAGS: [MOPS](#) [PREL](#) [NI](#) [NG](#)

SUBJECT: NIGERIA ASSURES NIGER ON MUTINEERS

CLASSIFIED BY AMBASSADOR HOWARD F. JETER FOR REASONS 1.5 (B & D).

11. (U) Responding to a request from the Niger Republic, Nigerian Minister of Foreign Affairs Sule Lamido promised that Nigeria would apprehend the approximately 100 Nigerien mutineers and return them to Niamey. Lamido, however, lamented the difficulty of identifying Nigerien soldiers among the residents of the border region. "If they remove their uniforms, it is easy to melt into the crowd," he commented.

12. (C) According to press reports, Yobe State has mobilized extra patrols on its border with Niger at Nguru, Karasuwa and Geidam, the areas of the state nearest the recent Nigerien revolt at Diffa. Some Embassy contacts speculate that the mutineers might try to cross the border in the tri-state region near Lake Chad in Borno state rather than near Yobe. One commented, "The (Lake Chad) region has been the home to many dissident factions from Chad over the years and Nigerian control of its territory in that area remains weak."

13. (C) COMMENT: The Nigerian police and military face many pressing tasks and the GON has no wish to harbor the rebels. However, barring a chance encounter along the remote border between the two countries, Nigeria's security forces are unlikely to launch a sustained operation to identify and apprehend the Nigeriens. Moreover, in a brief encounter with Ambassador Jeter, the Nigerien DATT said that Niamey now thinks that most of the rebels fled to Chad and not Nigeria.

JETER